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In case of malicious nonpayment, which in practice almost never occurs, the creditor turns to the village chief, who will make use of his powers. If even his efforts are unsuccessful, the creditor has the right to kill the debtor.

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Limitation of debts is unknown, but repayment in installments is customary. If a Meau debtor lives in a village other than the one where the creditor lives or moves to a different village, a sort of promissory note is made out. It consists of a piece of wood into which a notch is cut for the value of each ten pieces of silver. Thereupon the stick is split lengthwise in such a way that the halved notches remain on each of the sides of the stick. The creditor keeps one half of the stick; the debtor takes the other half with him. This practical custom seems to be very widespread among the Meau and not limited to Thailand. In any case Dhuraratsadorn (1) reports in similar fashion on the

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1. Page 172.

Meau in Tonkin.

If a creditor wants repayment from the debtor, he need not seek him out himself, but can ask someone else to demand the amount for him. He then gives the half of the stick to the messenger as identification. Upon presentation, the debtor is obliged to pay the messenger, identified by the half of the stick, the amount shown on the stick, beginning at the date agreed upon, provided that this half agrees with the one that remained with the debtor. On the other hand, if only partial payment is made, the old debt-stick is destroyed and a new one prepared showing the residual amount, and this is handled in the same way as the first. The messenger is then given a half of the stick to take back.

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The situation regarding property among the Akha differs considerably from that among the Meau. Uncultivated land belongs to no one; it is considered as unrestricted, as are hunting and fishing. Accordingly, the land may be taken into possession by any tribesman without further inquiry by merely beginning to clear and cultivate it. It is left entirely up to him to choose the land and the extent of the land. Since, however, land is usually

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AM 802

The numbers are called:	Among the Meau in Thailand:	Among the Akha:
1 000	[illegible]	[illegible]
10 000	[illegible]	[illegible]
100 000	[illegible]	[illegible]
many	[illegible]	[illegible]

In the case of numbers higher than twenty, various aids are used for further counting. Rice kernels, for instance, may represent the tens and maize the hundreds, for which I have given a practical example in the description of the division of the estate after the death of a family head (see the chapter, "Law and the Administration of Justice," the section, "Right of Succession").

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On the other hand, other counting aids, such as knotted cords and the like, are unknown, as are notched sticks, which serve exclusively as a promissory note, and, to be sure, only among the Meau, but not among the Akha (see the chapter, "Law and the Administration of Justice," the section, "Property Law"). Savina (1) reports differently

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1. II, p. 322.

concerning the Meau in Tonkin: His entire mathematical knowledge is restricted to the counting of notches in a piece of wood, in order to fix the most important events of his life. There are notches for births, deaths, marriages, drought, rain, and the harvest."

Neither the Akha nor the Meau have any special expressions for quantitative concepts such as threescore, dozen, or the like, but rather pronounce all numbers, even the highest. In this connection, the Akha know how to count up to about 100,000, the Meau far higher.

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Among both mountain peoples, I was unable to find any special arithmetical method or system. Also, no arithmetical instruction is given; the appropriate knowledge like all other knowledge, is picked up in daily life.